

Will You Be Mine? by UntilDawnClimbingClass

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Summary:

Despite apparently having harbored feelings for Steve for years, Nancy won't stop rejecting him. But King Steve won't let this go without trying one last thing...

Will You Be Mine?

Author's Note:

This fic is ridiculous. But I really enjoyed writing it. Whether you ship these two or not, give this a try.

Hope this gives you all a laugh!

No," she said.

A loud hoot came from the back of the classroom. "Give it up, Harrington. The chick says no."

Steve ignored the snickering and the curious stares from the rest of his classmates. He only had eyes for the girl in front of him, who gazed up at him in earnest refusal.

A clear and firm 'no.' Another clear and firm 'no,' to be exact.

In the past fourteen days, he had been rejected a grand total of five times. It didn't matter what he asked. Dinner? No. A movie? No. A game? No. A study date? No. A trip down the hall to her locker? No. He was beginning to think she wasn't capable of saying anything else.

The rowdy shouts from the class were drowned out by her silent resistance. Nancy Wheeler was one hard girl to get.

But alas, there was a twist to every story, and his was no exception. Everyone thought he had been pussy-whipped like a puppy by a mere girl. But that wasn't the case.

He slammed his hands against the desk and towered over her.

She looked up at him, demeanor innocent and unfazed.

He could no longer pinpoint what he was feeling anymore. But whatever it was, it sure as heck was bothering him like a damned toothache.

"But you like me," he accused with disbelief, paying no attention to

their audience. He hadn't planned on using this card, because Steve Harrington *never* had to resort to using such a menial tactic.

"All right, Steven, that's enough," The teacher said.

He ignored her.

A week ago, he discovered that Nancy had been harboring a secret crush on him for years.

Years.

The information had thrown him off of his feet. He'd wanted to stalk off to find her, and to demand why the hell she had turned down his offer not once, not twice, but four times.

Somewhere, a God was slapping his knee and snorting. *Son of a bitch.*

He didn't like to think himself particularly dense, but what. The. Fuck.

Leaning down, he stared as hard as he could into her eyes—a look he reserved for staring down his haters. "I heard that you've liked me since 7th grade?"

Like magic, the class hushed in anticipation of her answer.

She put down her pencil, probably realizing that she wasn't going to get any writing done. But the tremor in her hand didn't escape his notice.

Good. It gave him satisfaction that he was affecting her somehow.

"Maybe," she answered.

"Steve, I said enough. You are to sit down right—" The teacher cut in.

"And that I've been the center of your daydreams, night dreams, and fantasies for five years?" He continued, paying their teacher no heed.

"Try not to flatter yourself too much, Steve Harrington." Nancy rolled her eyes.

Someone blew a lewd and obnoxious whistle at her response.

He took a deep breath, forcing himself to chill out. Steve Harrington did *not* lose his cool.

"You want to be with me, just as much, if not more than I want to be with you."

A flicker of something passed through her expression.

"I'll get over it."

"Steve Harrington! Stop harassing Nancy and sit down. Now," the teacher ordered. For added emphasis, she pointed to the large clock on the wall. "Class started five minutes ago."

Nancy had already turned away from him, indicating his cue to go back and sit down.

While his determination instructed him to stay still, good sense won out, and he returned to his seat.

A few hands came out to pat him on the back, as consolation for his defeat.

"Better luck next time, soldier," Tommy said.

But Steve couldn't concentrate on what the teacher was saying, or what his friends were whispering. If he hadn't been so caught up in the workings of his own mind, he would have noticed that a certain face had turned to look at him not once, but a whole two times.

Steve leaned back against the wall, hands in his pockets, waiting outside the classroom.

He checked his watch. Five more minutes until class was out.

A month ago, he never would have imagined himself in this position. Even though he and Nancy had attended the same junior high, he never really paid any extra attention to her. Like most other people in

their grade, she was just always *there*.

Then, as if by serendipity, he started to bump into her more often. When he scanned a room, field, or cafeteria full of people, he would accidentally find himself focused on her—if only for a split second.

She wasn't sexy like Laurie Johnson, or hot like Becky Carruthers. She didn't have an ass like Amy Sander's either. Yet, he found himself growing accustomed to seeing her face every day.

She hadn't really changed much in appearances since seventh grade, but she was beautiful. There was no doubt about that.

As the days passed, he found himself suddenly listening, *actually* listening to what she was saying whenever she raised her hand, or when she made a presentation. At first, it had been out of boredom and curiosity. But the more he paid attention, the more he wanted to listen.

He had always known that she was smart, but hearing all of her thoughts and comments, he realized just how intelligent she was. Not nerd smart. She simply had really good ideas.

And she was funny. Not the funny he was used to. She had a different sense of humor than the guys around school or any of his friends, really. A kind of funny that he hadn't found funny before...

It wasn't long before he caught himself actively searching for her in the crowd, or anticipating her answers in class. It was a rather bizarre transition that had caught him off guard for the first few days.

Three weeks ago, their history teacher paired them up for the final project of the year. And damn it all to Hell and back, he enjoyed every second of it.

Since then, he hadn't cared about trying to hide his interest in her. Not really his style anyway. He could pursue whomever the hell he wanted, and the world had better be prepared to like it.

The bell rang.

Pushing himself off the wall, he waited as a stream of students exited

the room. When he saw the person he was looking for, he moved to walk beside her in a casual, no-big manner.

"You're not going to get to Nancy through me, Steve," Barb said, making no physical indication of his presence.

He put an arm around her shoulders and steered her down a less crowded hallway.

"See now, Holland , I always knew you were a smart one. Holland means smart and beautiful in...some other language. Right?"

"...No. Not even close."

He removed his arm, and laughed. "I can see why you and Nancy are friends."

"Isn't the best friend route a little old?" she asked, tone neither friendly nor hostile.

Neutral was good. He could take neutral.

"I figured, if you really care about her, you'd help me." He shrugged, acting nonchalant.

She stopped and pulled him to the side so that they weren't blocking a racing trio of freshmen. Facing him, she gave him a disapproving look, but said, "Okay. Let's get this over with. What do you want to know?"

He coughed, covering up the smile that his mouth was curving into. This had been easier than he thought. No pleading, begging, and groveling of any kind.

Like taking candy from a baby.

Sobering, he got straight to the point. "I don't understand why she won't go out with me."

Barb sighed, smoothing out her blouse, as if she was about to embark on a very difficult journey. "Nancy isn't exactly... like your ex-girlfriends."

He waved a hand to stop her. "I know we don't run in the same circles. But so what? There's no rule that says we can't date each other."

"You're oversimplifying things. There's a ninety-nine percent chance that your relationship—" She used one hand to air-quote 'relationship.' "—won't work out."

It annoyed him that Barb thought what he and Nancy could have was only good enough for a quote-unquote relationship. What? Just because they were different didn't mean their relationship would be a joke.

"Sure it can work."

"You guys have nothing in common."

That ticked him off even more. "How do you know? Don't you think that's an unfair assumption? My hobby isn't to go around forcing unwilling girls. The point is that she has feelings for me, too. And let me tell you, that doesn't account for nothing."

His short rant was rewarded with a look of sympathy.

She gestured behind him with a glance. "Then it's too bad someone else got there first."

He turned and followed the direction of Barb's gaze.

At the end of the hall, Nancy and Jonathan Byers were engrossed in conversation.

Steve turned back to Barb, completely incredulous. "Are you kidding me?"

Jonathan Byers was a weirdo. A loner. And Steve thought his face was creepy.

Barb shook her head. "He's planning on taking her to prom."

Someone swab his ears, because he must've heard her wrong.

"*That* is my competition?" He resisted the urge to gesture toward Jonathan. "But she doesn't even like him."

"Who says she doesn't? She's the one who asked *him*."

Steve's mood clouded over. Up until now, he hadn't even considered the possibility of absolute failure. "Explain this to me."

"He's safe," Barb said.

He couldn't believe this. "And what am I? A death sentence?"

"You're a player," she elaborated.

"I'm a what?" Was the entire school on acid? "Don't you think that label is unnecessary?"

She threw one hand up in the air because the other was still holding her textbooks.

"Will you look in a mirror!" she snapped, voice rising. "Girls throw themselves at you. How do you expect Nancy to be comfortable dating a guy who has a harem of she-slaves?"

Okay, that was a fair point against him. He wasn't naïve, and he wasn't going to play stupid.

Since the age of three, girls had been chasing him. They had liked to climb on him, hug him, and gnaw at his face. Fifteen years later, it was still the same three-step routine.

"Look, I can't help if they like me. But that doesn't automatically make me some douchebag Casanova."

"Okay, let's say you do get together with Nancy then. You romance her to the tips of her toes for an entire summer. Then what? When you're bored and you guys have to split ways, all she'll have left is heartache and your old high school sweater."

It took all of Steve and a little more to keep from rolling his eyes at the melodrama. Why was the woman always the victim?

"Which university is Nancy going to?" he asked, even though he already knew.

"Brown University," she answered in an I-told-you-so voice.

"Me, too." One of the biggest lies he's ever told.

Barb looked horrified, her face contorting in ways that faces shouldn't have been able to contort. "No way."

"Yes way."

"But...*how*?"

Did everyone think so highly of him? Yeah, he was no Einstein, but he kept his grades up. For the most part.

"Luck," he said with a shrug, not admitting that he hasn't even applied to colleges yet. But now he knows *where* he's going to apply.

"Yeah, I bet."

He took her insult with a smile. "So are you going to help me?"

"I'm not going to sweep her off her feet for you," she said, both wary and skeptical.

"I don't need you to. Just tell me what Nancy's weak spot is, and I'll handle the rest." He didn't need the best friend to do the wooing. That would be sad on a stick.

"You know she's looking at us."

"Let her look." He distributed his weight more evenly on both feet and flexed his shoulders and back. He had nothing to be ashamed of. And if his supposed harem of she-slaves had anything to say, it was a damn good view, too. "Come on, Holland. No more stalling. Pick her poison."

She ahem-ed and adjusted her glances, shifting her books to her other arm. "If you must know, she adores clichés."

"What?" He must've made a weird expression, because Barb smirked.

Why couldn't Nancy have liked something normal? Like kittens, or potted plants, or cheesecake or something. Something sold in stores.

"Like... you know, forbidden love, rich guy and poor girl, bad boy turned good. That kind of thing."

"Whoa, whoa." He held up a hand to stop her. "I *am* rich." Waving the hand meaninglessly in the air, he tried to make sense of this. "Let me get this straight. She refuses to go out with me, even though she 'adores' what she and I could become? Don't you think that's a little hypocritical?"

Barb blinked at him, face blank. "Yes—well, no."

Women.

A tap came on his back. Turning around, he came face to face with said hypocrite. If Barb thought this was going to stump him, she had another thing coming.

"Nancy, Holland and I were just talking about you."

"I know," she said, a troubled, halfhearted smile in place.

"And," he continued. "How is Mrs. Harrington doing today?"

She put on her, what he liked to call, academic face. "I don't know. Maybe you should call your mom and ask her yourself."

It was said with no sarcasm and no bite, just in that kind and wry way of hers that he was starting to like so much. He leaned into her, closing the distance between them.

"Thanks for the suggestion," he said, not loud enough for anyone else to hear.

The moment he felt her body respond—probably unwillingly—he backed off and patted her on the back in the most platonic way possible. "Well, I have to get going. You girls have a good weekend."

With a nod, he walked away, leaving two very perplexed females in his wake. There was no time to waste.

In the squishy depths of his brain, rusty wheels began to creak and turn...

Watch out, Nancy Wheeler. Steve Harrington is coming for you.

"Carol!" Steve knocked on his friend's door. "Open up!"

The door opened, and Carol huffed at him with her hands on her hips, hair only half-done. "What?" she demanded.

"Are you busy tonight?"

"Duh. It's Friday."

It was almost pathetic that he was the only one without plans on a Friday night. But it had been his choice to turn down the beach party. "Are you going out then?"

"No, Donna's coming over for a sleepover."

"Ah..." Did he really want to give them the opportunity to bag such incriminating evidence against him? "Can I... uh..."

Unwillingly, Nancy's tiny face pervaded his thoughts.

Stuffing the rest of his dignity down his throat, he asked, "Can I join you guys?"

"Come again?"

"Like, I mean—" he tried to explain, but anything he could think of sounded lame. "I need some help."

"With what?" His talk-a-thon best friend was reduced to those two incredulous words.

He shrugged, trying to play it cool. "Nancy Wheeler."

There was only a moment of silence before Carol started shrieking with laughter. "Oh, my God. YOU? *You* need my help getting a date?" she spazzed out between snorts.

"Fine, if you don't wanna help then I'm out of here." He began to turn around.

Stupid. What had he been thinking?

"Noooo! Wait! I wanna! I wanna! Let me call Donna. What do you need help with?"

This still sounded like a bad, bad idea. "She... she likes clichés."

Directly following his open sesame, the squealing commenced.

And that was more or less how he found himself sitting on a bed with two over-excitables girls.

He picked at the popcorn in his lap with little enthusiasm. In the past seven hours, they had watched all of the 'totally important' scenes of almost every chick flick known to Hollywood.

He had been exposed to so many clichés that his head hurt. Whatever brain matter he had to begin with had steadily leaked out of his ears—if not from the movies themselves, then from the two squealing ladies beside him. After every clip, he thought they couldn't possibly get more worked up, but when they fast-forwarded to the next scene, he was always proven wrong.

Carol fell back against the pillows with a high-pitched noise—a sound that was beyond his vocabulary. An echoing noise came from his other side.

Girls actually fell for this crap?

"Donna, rewind. We have to see that again!" Carol exclaimed.

"No!" He took the remote. "Let's not. I don't think this is going to make her stop saying no."

Carol rolled her eyes at him like the drama queen that she was.

"You're so dumb. No means yes. Right, Donna?"

"If the boy is good-looking and smart, then no definitely means yes."

"I'm pretty sure no means no," he said dryly. Or else he wouldn't be here right now.

"But you're King Steve..." Donna said, seeming completely bewildered by the situation.

He gave her a half-smile, knowing that she had had a crush on him since a year ago.

"I'll teach you some pickup lines," Carol suggested. "Since you're totally hopeless."

He pressed a couple of fingers into his eye sockets, hard enough to see stars. Had he really been reduced to this? It wasn't just pathetic or desperate anymore. Eighteen and taking love advice from these two morons...

"But he's *King Steve*..." Donna repeated, coming to his supposed rescue.

"No," Carol said in her *this-is-unacceptable* voice. "He must learn these lines. Steve, try this one—" Then, deepening her pitch to sound like a man, "*Hey baby, I can't find my puppy. Can you help me find him? I think he went into this cheap hotel room.*"

He threw popcorn at Carol's face at the same time Donna asked, "Why would he take her to a cheap hotel? Shouldn't he go somewhere expensive?"

Carol shook her head in despair. "Donna, honey, I still have so much to teach you. He has to take her to a cheap hotel so that they can..." Carol wiggled her hips against the bed. "Do that."

"Oooh." The girl finally clued in, and retreated in embarrassed silence.

"Look—" He started, about to get up when Carol began to spew. Yet again.

"Oh! You know what another good one is? *Would you touch me so I can tell my friends I've been touched by an angel?*"

"Jesus, Carol—"

"Ooh! Or, *you must be Jamaican, because Jamaican me crazy!* Or—"

"Enough!" he snapped. "Christ—did Tommy say this shit to you?"

He was underestimating himself. No cheesy chick flick hero or anyone else was going to be able to convince Nancy in his place. He wasn't ever going to be some smooth-talking, fictional—

He bolted upright.

That was it.

That was it.

The idea crashed down from the heavens, hitting him square between the eyes.

Barely able to contain the renewed rush of adrenaline he felt, he gave Carol a quick kiss on the cheek. "Thanks, Care.

And then in one leap, he jumped off of the bed, running out of the room.

He didn't stop until he reached Carol's phone downstairs in her father's office. Opening the top drawer of the large oak desk, he grabbed a bundle of elastic-banded Sharpies that he knew were there. Then, reaching for the phone, he dialed.

His heart was pounding like he just ran a one mile penalty lap. And it felt good. Exhilarating.

When the familiar voice picked up, he said, "Barb, it's Steve. Steve Harrington. Yes, I have your number. I asked for it from one of your little girl friends. What do you mean *why*? Don't you want to talk to me? No, don't hang up! I need to run something by you. Hello? *Hello?*"

Steve waited in the dark, and had been waiting for an hour—just in case she ignored his instructions and came early. Which, considering Nancy, wasn't out of the question.

He cleared his throat, even though it didn't need clearing. His arms were becoming sore.

Across his chest, he held the stack of white cardboard he'd worked so hard on the night before. There were sixteen 50 by 20 cards that represented his last effort, one last sprint to the finish. If she rejected him after this, then he would back down, tuck his tail between his legs, and give up like he should have done weeks ago. If she wasn't going to give them a chance, if she refused to meet him halfway, then he wasn't going to force her.

Balancing the stack in one hand, he used his other to readjust his sweater. June weather was giving him hell tonight. He should have come naked. Maybe she'd have appreciated that.

He checked the time.

10:55pm

Close, so close.

Standing on the fifty yard line, right in the middle of the football field, he cleared his throat again.

Damn.

He had to stop doing that. Puberty ended three years ago. His voice was fine. And if he did it again, he'd psyche himself into thinking that he was nervous.

He looked over to the scoreboard for the time.

10:55pm

Still?

Was this a joke?

To pass time, he recalled his earlier conversation with Nancy—for the umpteenth time.

"Hello?" she spoke into her phone.

He had planned to say hi first, but the words just came out.

"Meet me on the field at eleven tonight, sharp."

There was a pause.

"Steve?"

Damn if it didn't make him happy that she recognized his voice.

"And dress up for me. Won't you?"

"What? Stev—"

"Overalls. And an ugly shirt." He saw his dad's glasses on the table. "Oh—and do you wear contacts?"

"Yes, but—"

"Good. Take them out."

"Steve —"

"Don't be early," he added, and then promptly hung up.

He looked over at the time.

10:56pm

The hell?!

The night was getting darker and dark. The only light came from the light and sound control room that sat above the bleachers, where Tommy had just given him a cheesy two-thumbs up. It did nothing to ease his nerves.

She had refused all of his previous offers. What made him think that she would sneak out of her house in the middle of the night to see him?

Dream on, Steve.

Shit, what had he been thinking?

There was not one godforsaken reason in this world why she would—

A shifting movement caught his eye at the end of the field. He didn't have to guess.

It was Nancy.

11:00pm

And right on time.

He could spot her from the way her elbows locked when she stuck her hands in her pockets. But he wouldn't allow himself to feel relief because it meant that he had panicked before. And Steve Harrington did not panic.

He suppressed the urge to clear his lack of phlegm again.

She took a few steps forward, past the goal post.

He gave Tommy the signal.

Game on.

Just as she passed the goal line, the first set of lighting fixtures flashed on like a loud clap of thunder. He saw the effect of the boom as she jumped, or rather, skipped too high.

She was wearing a pair of overall shorts, glasses, and a plain white t-shirt—just like he'd asked. From the corner of the field, right in the middle of the end zone, her gaze landed on him immediately.

Yeah, she was fifty yards away, but he knew.

He knew.

If she turned away now, it would be the end. He wasn't going to do the chasing anymore. If she wanted this, she would have to come to him.

Silently, he dared her to move forward. He didn't care if he was threatening to pop her bubble of safety, or blowing up her idea of happily ever after. So what if there were no guarantees in life?

Steve Harrington would make his own guarantee.

And as if she had felt the force of his will, her feet began to make their way toward him.

He felt something stirring inside him when she crossed the ten yard line.

Upon reaching the twenty yard line, the second set of lights flashed on. But she didn't jump this time. She neither hesitated nor stopped. She didn't even slow down. Those sneakers of hers were making their way full speed ahead.

His hands tightened beneath the cardboard.

Twenty-five yards.

With each step she took, she became clearer, her features sharper. Though he was sure he could see those monkey ears from miles away.

Thirty yards.

His heels dug into the fifty yard line as he felt a sharp pain at his side, like a cramp.

Was he breathing?

Fuck.

Thirty-five yards.

It felt like seconds. But he didn't move, not once. Nor did his expression change. He didn't dare hope.

Her small feet shuffled forward, one yard at a time. Nothing on her face betrayed what she was feeling. But if he was honest with himself, he sucked at gauging other people's facial expressions.

Was she surprised? Thrown off? Pissed off?

Forty yards.

Left and right, the third and final lights came on, illuminating the entire field and the girl who was approaching him. The tension in his body eased away. This was it.

High school was coming to an end, but this was just their beginning, their time to shine. Opportunities like this only came once, and he'd be damned if he didn't grab it and run.

She stopped at forty-five yards.

Upon seeing the end of her arrival, he greeted her with a true Steve Harrington grin.

They stood facing each other for what seemed like eternity. She didn't smile, nor did she say hi.

Without another word, he took away the front piece of blank cardboard to reveal the words on the second card.

In bold block letters, the card said:

I DIDN'T LOSE A BET.

He watched her read the card, then look at him, puzzled.

He flipped to the next one.

I AM NOT YOUR BROTHER'S BEST FRIEND OR YOUR STEPBROTHER.

Her brows lowered in question, but she took a few tentative steps forward. He wasn't sure if something had changed in her countenance.

**OUR FAMILIES ARE NEITHER RIVALS NOR ARE THEY
SEGREGATED BY SOCIAL CLASS.**

With each revealed card, he recited the lines in his head. And though he tried, he couldn't keep the humor from creeping onto his face when he revealed the next message.

**WE ARE NOT CHILDHOOD ENEMIES WHO FEEL SEXUALLY
ATTRACTED TO EACH OTHER.**

The words 'who feel sexually attracted to each other' were crossed out in red. He watched her stifle a laugh, or perhaps a hiccup. Against his will, he cleared his throat again.

ON ANY OTHER DAY, I'M JUST STEVE HARRINGTON

BUT TONIGHT...

BECAUSE YOU DIG IT...

I AM THE KING OF THE SCHOOL. AND YOU ARE MY NERD.

He smiled. Something had changed in her eyes. The wariness before had been replaced with something warmer, something softer, something that made that godforsaken hope rise in his chest. He took away the top card.

WE MAY NOT GET MARRIED AND HAVE 20 CHILDREN,

BUT WHY NOT TRY?

This time, her eyes crinkled up in genuine, but silent laughter.

He revealed the next card.

BEFORE YOU SAY 'NO' AGAIN. I HAVE ONE LAST QUESTION.

Flip.

BUT FIRST—LOOK AT THE TIME.

He glanced down to make sure the big, chunky black arrow he drew pointed in the direction of the scoreboard.

Okay but does this count as one-sided, or at least somewhat one-sided? That's what I tagged the pairing as but I'm not sure.